

## Luther and Hutten.

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sword. If we punish thieves with the axe, heretics with fire, why do we not rather attack these masters of perdition, these cardinals, these popes, and the whole rabble of the Roman Sodom and wash our hands in their blood, and thus free ourselves from the common and most dangerous conflagration of all ? " "I implore you," we find him writing in the same militant spirit to Spalatin (February 1520), "if you rightly understand the gospel, do not imagine that its cause can be furthered without tumult, distress, and uproar. You cannot make a pen out of a sword, or peace out of war. The word of God is a sword, is warfare, destruction, wrath, spoiling, an adder's tongue, and, as Amos says, like the lion in the footpath and the bear in the forest." Thus in the earlier stage of the Lutheran movement Luther and Hutten are allies, if not exactly in aim, at least in method. Both preach the gospel of force as the only remedy for the times. True it is, the emperor, the princes, the constituted powers of the empire that shall apply the remedy, but Hutten at least was ready to make use of any force, constituted or non-constituted, to bring about the desired end. If the emperor and the princes will not join in the crusade against Antichrist and in behalf of a free Germany, cannot the Raubritter ride a horse and wield a sword ?

" Vil harnisch ban wir und vil pferd,  
Vil hallenbarten und vil schwerd,  
Und so hilft freuntlich manung nit  
So wollen wir die brauchen mit."

The emperor and the princes proving lukewarm in the cause of a free and united fatherland, the lesser nobility shall do it in spite of them, and for a leader Hutten turns away from the kaiser to Franz von Sickingen, the hero of all the daring banditti of the age.

Sickingen was the most splendid Reichsritter of his time, the bold leader who fought other men's quarrels as well as his own, and had grown rich and powerful in consequence. He had done much rough work in these filibustering raids, and his reputation was not exactly that of a saint. " For the last two years," complained the burgomaster and Council of Worms, with whom he waged a deadly feud (March 1517), " Sickingen has been devastating the land, cutting down the